(b) and (c) The Government of India had provided a list of 79 victims, as obtained from the survivors of the tragedy, to the Government of Punjab in January 1997. The Government of Punjab had sanctioned *ex-gratia* payment of Rs. 50,000 to the family of each victim.

Transferring Malta Boat Tragedy case to European Tribunal

5058. SHRI B. P. SINGHAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would take the Malta Boat Tragedy case to the European Tribunal based in Brussels (Belgium) for the claims of the victims families and also pursue the claim cases filed by the victims families in Italian Courts;

(b) whether Government would handover the CBI case against the 27 Indian culprits going on in Delhi to a Special Court for speedy disposal; and

(c) whether Government would sponsor the endeavors of the Malta Boat Tragedy Probe Mission and give official recognition to the NGOs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA) : (a) There is no proposal to take the Malta Boat Tragedy case to the European Tribunal based in Brussels, Belgium. The preliminary hearing of the case in Italy is scheduled for May 27, 2003. The relatives of the victims may, at that stage, implaed themselves as plaintiffs and sue for damages.

(b) As the case is currently being heard by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Delhi, there is no proposal to hand it over to a Special Court.

(c) While the Government has afforded all possible assistance to the Malta Boat Tragedy Probe Mission in pursuing the interests of the victims and their families, it does not feel that there is a need for official recognition of the NGO for this purpose.

Amendment in the Labour Laws

5059. SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce amendments in the Labour Laws seeking to open core and non-core sectors in the contract labour.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government consider to introduce reforms for the social security of workers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the sectors identified by Government to allow contract labour?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL) : (a) to (e) In the wake of economic liberalisation, judgement of various courts and experience gathered in the administration of the Act, the Government have undertaken a review of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. However, amendment to the Act has not yet been finalised.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Employees Provident Fund Organisation has recommended certain amendments to the EPF & MP Act to make social security of workers more affordable, selective and cost-effective.

Consolidation of Labour Laws

5060. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission on Labour has recommended consolidation of all the Labour Laws;

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted the recommendation;

(c) if so, what action has been taken in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Second National Commission on Labour in its Report submitted to the Government has made wide-ranging recommendations on various facets of labour *viz.* review of laws, social security women & child labour, skill development, wages, labour administration, unorganised sector etc. The Commission, among other things, have recommended consolidation of Labour Laws into a few broad groups *viz.* industrial relations, wages, social security, occupational safety and health, welfare and working conditions, etc.

(b) to (d) The Report of the Commission has been receiving most attention of the Government. Discussions/interactions have been held with each of the Central Trade Unions, Employers' Organisations and also with experts. The Report of the Commission was discussed at the 38th Session of Indian Labour